



Service Six

Changing Lives • Creating Futures

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION POLICY

January 2025

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Last Reviewed: January 2025

Review Due By: January 2027

Lead Role/Manager: CEO

Others involved in implementing: Board of trustees and managers

Service Six believes that the equality, diversity and inclusion of all people is an asset and that:

Discrimination against any person or group is morally and legally unjustifiable, and, that each member of the community as a citizen, service user, service provider or as an employee of Service Six is entitled to expect fair and equal treatment at all times.

We aim to:

- Provide accessible services that meet people's needs, regardless of background and lifestyle and delivered in a way that is efficient, effective and of an excellent quality.
- Provide services that are delivered by a workforce that reflects the communities that we serve and at all levels of staff and management.
- Ensure that we maintain and deliver fair and equal recruitment policies and practices. Providing a work environment that is safe, accessible, free from harassment and discrimination. A place where individuals values, beliefs, identities and cultures are respected.
- Add value to people's lives, ensuring that all citizens have the opportunity to reach their full potential by reducing inequality and social exclusion.
- Ensure proportionate take up of our services by all communities in the county.
- Ensure fair and equal treatment for service users and employees.

THE LAW – THE EQUALITY ACT 2010

It is unlawful to discriminate directly or indirectly in recruitment or employment because of a 'protected characteristic'. The Equality Act 2010 defines the protected characteristics as being age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, pregnancy, maternity, race (which includes colour, nationality, caste and ethnic or national origins), sexual orientation, religion or belief, or because someone is married or in a civil partnership. This policy builds on the statutory position to ensure effective policies and practice that promote equality and inclusion.

Discrimination after employment may also be unlawful, e.g. refusing to give a reference for a reason related to one of the protected characteristics.

It is also unlawful to discriminate against or harass a member of the public or service user in the provision of services or goods or to fail to make reasonable adjustments to overcome barriers to using services caused by disability.

The duty to make reasonable adjustments includes the removal, adaptation or alteration of physical features, if the physical features make it impossible or unreasonably difficult for disabled people to make use of services. In addition, service providers have an obligation to think ahead and address any barriers that may impede disabled people from accessing a service.

TYPES OF UNLAWFUL DISCRIMINATION

Direct discrimination

Is where a person is treated less favourable than another because of a protected characteristic. However, discrimination may be lawful if there is an occupational requirement which is core to a job role and a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

Indirect discrimination

Means putting in place, a rule or policy; or way of doing things that has a worse impact on someone with a protected characteristic than someone without one, when this cannot be objectively justified.

Harassment

Is where there is unwanted behaviour related to a protected characteristic (other than marriage and civil partnership, and pregnancy and maternity) which has the purpose or effect of violating someone's dignity or which creates a hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. It does not matter whether or not this effect was intended by the person responsible for the conduct.

Associative discrimination

Is where the individual treated less favourable does not have a protected characteristic but is discriminated against because of their association with someone who does e.g. the parent of a disabled child.

Perceptive discrimination

Is where the individual discriminated against or harassed does not have a protected characteristic but they are perceived to have a protected characteristic.

Third-party harassment

Occurs where an employee is harassed by third parties such as; service users due to a protected characteristic.

Victimisation

Is treating someone unfavorably because they have taken some form of action relating to the Equality Act i.e. because they have supported a complaint or raised a grievance under the Equality Act 2010, or because they are suspected of doing so. However, an employee is not protected from victimisation if they acted maliciously or made or supported an untrue complaint.

Failure to make reasonable adjustments

Is where a rule or policy or way of doing things has a worse impact on someone with a protected characteristic compared with someone who does not have that protected characteristic and the employer has failed to make reasonable adjustments to enable the disabled person to overcome the disadvantage.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IN EMPLOYMENT

We will avoid unlawful discrimination in all aspects of employment including recruitment, promotion, opportunities for training, pay and benefits, discipline and selection for redundancy. Job descriptions will avoid any unnecessary requirements (those unrelated to effective performance) that may otherwise have deterred applicants. We will base decisions on objective criteria. We will consider making reasonable adjustments in recruitment as well as in day-to-day employment.

SERVICE USERS, SUPPLIERS AND OTHERS

We will not discriminate unlawfully against service users using or seeking to use the services we provide. If you are bullied or harassed by a service user, suppliers, contractor, visitor or others, or if you witness someone else being bullied or harassed, you are asked to report this to your manager who will take appropriate action.

TRAINING

We will provide information and guidance to those involved in recruitment or other decision making where equal opportunities issues are likely to arise to help them understand their responsibilities and to avoid the risk of discrimination.

SHARED RESPONSIBILITIES

All staff are responsible for supporting the organisation in meeting its commitment and avoiding unlawful discrimination. If you believe that you have been discriminated against you should report this to your line manager or the chief executive under the grievance procedure. If your complaint involves bullying or harassment, the grievance procedure is modified as set out in the dignity at work policy. We take any complaint seriously and you will not be penalised for raising a grievance, even if your grievance is not upheld, unless your complaint is both untrue and made in bad faith.

If you witness what you believe to be discrimination you should report this to your line manager or the chief executive as soon as possible.

Employees can be held personally liable as well as, or instead of, the organisation for any act of unlawful discrimination. Employees who commit serious acts of harassment may be guilty of a criminal offence. Acts of discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation against employees or customers are disciplinary offences and will be dealt with under our disciplinary procedure. Discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation may constitute gross misconduct and could lead to dismissal without notice.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

This policy will be monitored periodically to judge its effectiveness and will be updated in accordance with changes in the law. We will report to the board of trustees on any actions or activities undertaken to improve equality of opportunity. Any information provided by job applicants and employees for monitoring purposes will be used only for these purposes and will be dealt with in accordance with the Data Protection legislation.

LEGAL RESPONSIBILITIES

We will abide by our legal obligations and duties including those defined under the following legislation:

- Sex Discrimination Act 1975.
- Equal Pay Act 1970.
- Race Relations Act 1976 as amended (2000).
- Human Rights Act 1998.
- Equality Act 2010.

And will work within guidance and Codes of Practice from the:

- Charity Commission for England & Wales.
- Charity Governance Code.
- Equality and Human Rights Commission.

OUR EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES STATEMENT COMMITS US TO

- Improving equalities practice at all levels.
- Developing equalities objectives and targets within all service areas which lead to measurable improvements.
- Developing and promoting anti-discrimination policies and practice at all levels and in all of our involvement and interaction with the public.
- Comply fully with our legal obligations under equality laws and guidance.

OUR EQUALITY STATEMENT AIMS TO

- Ensure that our services are developed and delivered so that they meet the needs of all young people, including those at risk of social exclusion.
- Ensure that services are accessible to all who need them and that staff and managers are trained to understand how to make this happen.
- Ensure that as far as possible, we enable people to fully participate in consultation over the development, planning and delivery of services.
- Ensure that we work effectively with partners to develop and deliver on equality, inclusion and diversity objectives.
- Ensure that we respond quickly to legislation and national policy initiatives and guidance on anti-discrimination measures and practice.
- Ensure that we effectively monitor the implementation of our action plan in achieving our goals.
- Ensure that we actively work towards eliminating barriers in our own systems and Procedures.
- Ensure that our work is sustainable in its outcomes and impact.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF ALL WORKING FOR OR IN THE CHARITY

- All working in or for the charity will cooperate fully with this equal opportunities policy.
- Not to discriminate.
- Not to attempt to encourage others to discriminate.
- Not to physically or psychologically harass, abuse or intimidate others.
- To raise awareness with a manager of the charity about any act of discrimination.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SERVICE USERS

- All service users will cooperate fully with this equal opportunities policy.
- Not to discriminate.
- Not to attempt to encourage others to discriminate.
- Not to physically or psychologically harass, abuse or intimidate others.
- To raise awareness with a member of staff or manager about any act of discrimination and where necessary refer to the charity's grievance procedure as appropriate.
- Where the grievance procedure is fully utilised and the service user is still unsatisfied with the outcome/s the service user can choose to approach the charity's commissioning bodies.